

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COLOMB 03754 210525Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PER-05 CA-01 SY-05 /022 W
-----063392 210530Z /21/13

R 018954Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1140

UNCLAS COLOMBO 3754

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT CORRECTED)

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, APER, CGEN, AMGT

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FSL POSITION FOR CONSULAR SECTION

1. BACKGROUND. THE POST'S CONSULAR WORKLOAD HAS INCREASED DRAMATICALLY SINCE JANUARY 1978. SITUATION IS MOST ACUTE IN OUR VISA WORKLOAD WHICH HAS INCREASED 40 PERCENT SINCE JULY 1977. THIS IS DUE TO THE RELAXATION OF EXCHANGE CONTROL REGULATIONS IN NOVEMBER 1977 WHICH PERMIT SRI LANKANS TO OBTAIN FUNDS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL. BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT CHANGE OF JULY 1977 FOREIGN EXCHANGE WAS RARELY MADE AVAILABLE FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FREE TRADE ZONE IS ATTRACTING FOREIGN BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT TO SRI LANKA. WE ARE SEEING A MATCHING INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BUSINESS VISAS WE ISSUE TO SRI LANKANS GOING TO THE U.S. TO CONSULT ON THESE MATTERS. U.S. CITIZEN SERVICES ARE ALSO IN GREATER DEMAND AS MORE : S TRAVEL TO SRI LANKA BOTH AS TOURISTS AND IN CONNECTION WITH THE FREE TRADE ZONE .

2. JUSTIFICATION. THE CONSULAR SECTION HAS ONE CONSULAR OFFICER (FSO) AND ONE CONSULAR ASSISTANT (FSL). WE HAVE A PIT POSITION FOR THE SUMMER, BUT A PART-TIME EMPLOYEE WILL NOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR PREDICTABLY INCREASING WORK TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR. THE FOLLOWING STATISTICS DOCUMENT THE NEED FOR A SECOND FULL TIME FSL POSITION.

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WORKLOAD:

NIVS PROCESSED--

JANUARY TO JULY 1977 - 667

JANUARY TO JULY 1978 - 932

WE HAVE DELAYED REQUESTING ADDITIONAL STAFF TO ENSURE THAT WE WERE NOT REACTING TO A TEMPORARY SITUATION, EITHER PENT UP LOCAL TRAVEL DEMANDS WHICH WOULD ABATE, OR A SEASONAL RUSH. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE MOTIVATIONS OF OUR APPLICATNS AND THIS SOCIETY NOW CONVINCES US WE ARE INVOLVED IN A SECULAR INCREASE, NOT A TEMPORARY PHENOMENON. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A 21 INCREASE IN THE IV WORKLOAD AT THIS POST SINCE 1974. IN 1977 WE PROCESSED 185 IV S VS. 153 IV S IN 1974.

U.S. CITIZEN SERVICES--

FY 1974 - SCS CASES	244
PPT CASES	125
TOTAL	369

FY 1975 - SCS CASES	279
PPT CASES	111
TOTAL	390

AN INCREASE OF 5.7
PERCENT OVER FY 1974

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FY 1976 - SCS CASES	284
PPT CASES	170
TOTAL	454

AN INCREASE OF 16.4
PERCENT OVER FY-1975

FY 1977 - SCS CASES	312
PPT CASES	258
TOTAL	570

AN INCREASE OF 25.6
PERCENT OVER FY-1976

THERE HAS BEEN A 47.7 PERCENT INCREASE IN U.S. CITIZEN WORLOAD SINCE 1974

OTHER FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WORKLOAD:

AIHERE HAS BEEN A 35 PERCENT INCREASE IN CONSULAR CORRESPONDENCE AND CABLE TRAFFIC IN FY 1977 AND THERE WILL BE FURTHER INCREASES IN FY 1978. WITH MORE EMPHASIS PLACED ON U.S. CITIZEN SERVICES AND THE STEADY INCREASE IN THIS AREA OF OUR WORK, THE SINGLE CON-
SULAR OFFICER MUST DEVOTE AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF TIME TO THIS

FUNCTION PLACING ADDITIONAL BURDENS ON THE CONSULAR ASSISTANT.

3. SUMMARY. AN INSPECTION REPORT PREPARED BY S/IG IN 1976 CLEARLY INDICATED A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE IN THE CONSULAR SECTION. THE REPORT UNDERSTANDABLY WAS CONFINED TO DEALING ONLY WITH THE THEN VISIBLE PEAK SEASON CONSULAR WORK PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, A SECOND FULL-TIME LOCAL CONSULAR POSITION IS NOW REQUIRED JUST TO HANDLE OUR MUCH HIGHER WORK NORM. THE EMBASSY THEREFORE RECOMMENDS THZT THE DEPARTMENT PROMPTLY APPROVE A SECOND LOCAL POSITION IN THE CONSULAR SECTION.

WRIGGINS

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